

54 ^MILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND
EEESEMEE

"Docks Napolfon," where goods, coming into Paris by the St. Martin Canal, were landed. The establishment of this entrepot and its adjuncts was carried out between 1833 and 1840; * the adjoining Rue de la Douane took its name from the enterprise; and it was there, then, that Zola, after failing at his examinations, secured employment as a clerk, the situation being found for him by his father's friend, Maitre Labot, the advocate.

But the salary was the barest pittance. How could a young man of twenty live, in Paris, on two francs a day? Moreover, there was no prospect whatever of any "rise." At the expiration, therefore, of two months, — after trudging a couple of miles twice a day between the "Docks" and the Quartier Latin, passing on the road the great Central Markets, whose wondrous life he now began to observe, — Zola threw up this employment; and from the beginning of March, 1860, till the end of that year, then all through 1861, and the first three months of 1862, he led a life of dire Bohemian poverty. On arriving in Paris in February, 1858, he had lived with his mother at 63, Rue Monsieur-le-Prince. Thence, in January, 1859, they had moved to 241, Rue St. Jacques, a narrow and ancient thoroughfare, long one of the main arteries of Paris, intimately

associated, too, with the student history of the original Quartier Latin. But in April, 1860, at the time when Zola quitted the "Docks," he and his mother found a cheaper lodging at 35, Rue St. Victor, another old street, on the slope of the "Montagne Ste. Genevi&ve," towards the Halle aux Vins and the Jardin des Plantes.

¹ Frederic Lock's "Dictionnaire topographique et historique de l'ancien Paris," Paris, n. d. "but *dr*: 1856.